

Olmsted

"The best things from an artistic point of view are the Olympic mountains, the Cascades, Mount Rainier and the two beautiful lakes. These are things that can not be matched anywhere else in the country. If the landscaping has made the most of these natural beauties at hand, then it may be considered a success."

"John C. Olmsted Visits the Fair," Seattle P-I, May 29, 1909

NEWS

FRIENDS OF SEATTLE'S OLMSTED PARKS

Fall 2009

Vol. 29 No.2

2009 FSOP Walking Tours



This summer's walking tours of the Olmsted-designed Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition grounds on the University of Washington campus were a smashing success. Over 500 people learned about the world's fair held a century ago in Seattle and its layout and design that showcased a number of features often seen in Olmsted's designs, such as the capturing of the distant landscape through vistas, meandering paths in a wooded "Park," and water features. The tours proved so popular, an additional walk was added in mid-October to accommodate demand.

We would like to thank Carl Sander and the Burke Museum, as well as Cunningham Hall and the Allen Library, for allowing us to use their meeting rooms for our introductory PowerPoint presentations. We also want to thank Humanities Washington for their grant, which helped make this project possible.

Membership Renewal

FSOP has changed our membership term to the calendar year. If you joined before July of this year, please renew for 2010 today! Membership forms can be downloaded from our website, seattleolmsted.org.

Membership dues and donations can be mailed to:

FSOP
P.O. Box 9884
Seattle, WA 98109

FSOP President's Letter

This has been another great centennial year as we celebrated the anniversary of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, held on the University of Washington campus in 1909. Not only have we had the chance to share John C. Olmsted's involvement in the A-Y-P with a wide audience through walking tours, publications, symposiums, and a display panel, we have also contemplated the A-Y-P's Olmsted legacy on the campus. In addition to the most prominent feature, the Rainier Vista, we found numerous remnants that continue to shape the landscape. As we head into the second century, we hope to continue to preserve those legacies of the fair and Olmsted's vision for the campus.

Please join us at Gould Hall on **December 2nd** in the early evening for a forum about how the Olmsted legacy can guide and inform future landscape design on the campus and how its interconnections with Seattle's unparalleled system of Olmsted-designed parks and boulevards can be strengthened. Please see the program description on page 4 of this newsletter.

For more information on the A-Y-P, interpretive panels from HistoryLink.org, along with FSOP, are on display at the Klondike Gold Rush Museum in Pioneer Square through the end of the year.



University of Washington campus, 1924, showing Rainier Vista, the lake vistas, and remaining circulation routes from the A-Y-P

On September 20th, we enjoyed a beautiful day in Volunteer Park for our Annual Meeting. We welcomed two new members to our board. Jim Gale, a public

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health professor, has long admired Olmsted's designs and his social vision. Kathy Mendelson, a horticultural historian, worked with us on our A-Y-P tours this summer, sharing her bountiful knowledge of Olmsted's planting plans for the exposition. Existing board members Dodi Fredericks, Susan Olmsted, Secretary, and Charlie Sundberg, Treasurer, were re-elected and Sue Nicol was elected Vice President.

At our July meeting we heard a presentation by the Center for Wooden Boats about their plans to expand their operations to the north shore of Lake Union. A Metro-owned property just west of the Harbor Police dock adjacent to Gas Works Park is available for purchase. The Center for Wooden Boats hopes to raise enough money to purchase the property and renovate an existing building to be used as a community center, a historic boat renovation space, and a public boat launch called the Northlake Community Wharf. The plan has the enthusiastic support of the Wallingford community and the Seattle City Council recently passed a resolution supporting the project.



Concept drawing of Northlake Community Wharf by Chris Butler (Courtesy Friends of Northlake Community Wharf, northlakewharf.wordpress.com)

Detailed plans have not yet been drawn, but the site offers an excellent opportunity for shore access near the heavily-used Gas Works Park and the Center for Wooden Boats plans to integrate the new space's landscape design with that of the park. Board members applauded this opportunity to implement another link in Olmsted's vision for lakeside access around (and across) the lake.

You should have already received a membership renewal flyer in the mail. We have decided to implement a calendar-year membership term, thereby simplifying our renewal process. Please renew your membership today. Your dues support our efforts to preserve the Olmsted legacy in the Pacific Northwest, as well as raise awareness of Olmsted's vision for

Seattle's park system. It is my pleasure to serve you and the Olmsted parks and boulevards as FSOP President

Brooks R. Kolb, ASLA

Capitol Campus in Olympia - Feb. 27

One of Washington's most beautiful public grounds, the state capitol campus in Olympia, was designed by the Olmsted Brothers in the early part of the last century. In order to increase public knowledge of the Capitol's Olmsted legacy, FSOP is partnering with League of Women Voters of Washington and Thurston County, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and National Association for Olmsted Parks to develop a brochure about the grounds. Please save **February 27th** and watch for news about a forum and walking tour in Olympia on our website and in future newsletters.

In related news, the state recently hired Mithun and Arbutus Design to consult on the West Capitol Campus Historic Landscape Preservation Master Plan. While the grounds today are beautiful in many ways, and while the historic "bones" are remarkably intact, key elements of the Olmsted plan remain unrealized, particularly the intended layers of trees and vegetation. This condition, combined with the host of documentation and correspondence recently retrieved from the Olmsted National Historic Site and the Library of Congress, provides an excellent opportunity for cultural landscape preservation. The master plan was completed earlier this year and now awaits funding for its implementation. It can be viewed at www.ga.wa.gov/MasterPlan/LandscapeMasterPlan.pdf.

New Signs Mark Boulevards

As you traveled about town this fall you may have noticed the new brown and white street signs marking historic Seattle Parks-owned boulevards, many of which were planned by the Olmsted Brothers as part of the Parks and Boulevards Plan of 1903. This project grew out a recommendation that came out of our 2003 Centennial. We are thrilled to see the signs up and extend our thanks to Kathleen Conner, Kevin Stoops, and Pam Alspaugh of the Seattle Parks Department and Heather Marx, Roxanne Thomas, and Erin Harris from Seattle Department of Transportation for their work on this project.

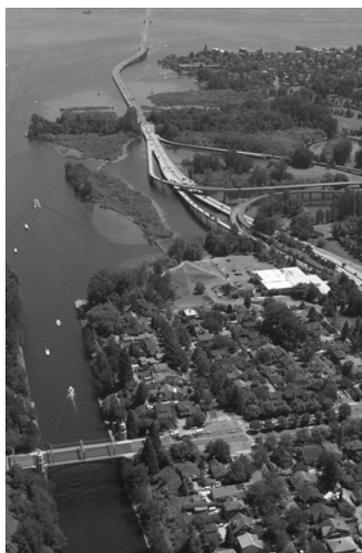
SR 520 Mediation Process Continues

The SR 520 Mediation process continues, with Larry Sinnott, FSOP board member representing FSOP on the panel. During the last legislative session a SR 520 Legislative Workgroup was appointed to find a preferred alternative for a bridge design. A subgroup, the Westside Workgroup, will make a recommendation on the Montlake Interchange configuration in November. The full Legislative Workgroup will then decide whether to follow that recommendation. They will publish their final recommendation in December.

There are three alternatives currently being considered. Larry, representing FSOP, has helped develop Alternative A, which offers the least encroachments into Olmsted-designed Washington Park and Arboretum and Lake Washington Boulevard and a cost-effective solution to improving transit. Federal and state agencies have been critical of Alternative K because of its cost and environmental impacts, which are significantly higher than the other alternatives. Alternative L's impact on the neighborhood, Lake Washington Boulevard, and the Arboretum would be disruptive because of the new bridge design it proposes for the Montlake Cut and the routing of traffic onto the boulevard.

The Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement is due to be published at the end of December. It will have detailed information on all three alternatives. The final preferred alternative will be selected by the legislature, and its impacts and mitigation measures will be published in a Final Environmental Impact Statement late next year.

Contact your state legislator to voice your support for protecting Seattle's Olmsted legacy. For more information about the project and the alternatives, including animated simulations, go to www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR520Bridge.



Aerial of Washington Park, Montlake, Foster Island, State Route 520, and Montlake Bridge, 2001 (Courtesy Seattle Municipal Archives, Item No. 115059)

Seattle Parks Projects

by Kathleen Conner, Parks Liaison to the FSOP Board

There are many capital and maintenance projects occurring in Olmsted parks in Seattle.

Brown Boulevard Signs: At long last, brown park boulevard signs are being installed by Seattle Department of Transportation on major park boulevards, some of which are also Olmsted boulevards. Lake Washington, Ravenna, and Magnolia boulevards are the first to get the new signs. These signs will help identify Parks-owned property, which should help reduce encroachment on public property and will promote public awareness of Parks' historic boulevard system. Look for more of these signs to be installed in the next few years on Queen Anne (now underway), Mt. Baker, Interlaken, and other Parks boulevards.

Seward Park Play Area: The design for the play area near the entry to Seward Park has been completed and construction drawings are being developed. Construction of the play area will be completed by June 2010.



Kinneer Park, 1909 (Courtesy Seattle Municipal Archives, Item No. 29506)

Kinneer Park: There has been community interest in revitalizing the park. Vegetation management and debris cleanup efforts have occurred in recent months. A group has submitted a Neighborhood Matching Grant application to plan park improvements.

Gas Works Park West Entry: A new path and landscaping are under construction to connect Northlake Way to Gas Works Park. It will help define the park edges and make the western entry more pleasant.

Lower Woodland Playfields #2 and #7: The sand/silt fields #2 and #7 have been converted to synthetic turf with Parks and Green Space Levy funding. This change will allow for greater year-round use of the fields for soccer, baseball, and general use.

Green Lake Shade Garden: The Shade Garden project at Green Lake is completed. Improvements to the north side of the park include an improved path along the allee of trees from the street to the community center, new benches, planting beds, and a plaza with an arch from Martha Washington School, a former elementary school in South Seattle.

West Point Lighthouse: Plans are in progress to remove lead paint and repaint and preserve the exterior of the West Point Lighthouse in Discovery Park. The work will be completed in 2010.

Invasive Plant Removal (Various Parks): Work parties are on-going in the park system to remove ivy and other invasive plants. Find out about future work parties of other volunteer opportunities at www.seattle.gov/parks/volunteers. Or call (206) 684-8028 for more information.

Olmsted

FRIENDS OF SEATTLE'S OLMSTED PARKS

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Membership Information

The Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks is a 501(C)3 organization dedicated to raising the awareness and protection of Seattle's Olmsted park and boulevard system. We depend on members' dues and donations to support our efforts. Dues for individuals are \$25/year and households \$50/year, which helps defray program, newsletter, and mailing expenses.

A-Y-P Forum: Looking Forward - Dec. 2

As the year-long celebration of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition centennial draws to an end, we invite you to attend a forum about the future of the Olmsted legacy on the UW campus. The forum will look to the future and how this legacy can be acknowledged and improved. Presenters include Robert Sabbatini, a San Francisco-based landscape architect and planner who specializes in historic campus preservation planning, focusing particularly on U.C.-Berkeley and Mills College, and Susan Olmsted, FSOP board member and project manager for the Olympia Capitol Campus Preservation Plan, who will discuss the relevance of their work on these other Olmsted-designed campuses to thinking about the UW campus legacy. This will be followed by a panel discussion of the challenges and opportunities of preserving the legacy. Please join us for the reception and forum on **December 2nd**, at 5:30 p.m., at Gould Hall (located at 3949 15th Avenue NE, in the University District). To provide background on the Olmsted Brother's work on the campus, Brooks Kolb will present "Olmsted and the Evolution of the UW Campus," at 4:30 p.m. For more information, email friends@seattleolmsted.org.

New Year's Day Walking Tour

Join us for a winter walk through Interlaken Park on New Year's Day. We will meet at the northwest entrance of the park where Interlaken Boulevard meets Delmar Drive at 1:00 p.m. on **January 1, 2010**. The walk is on mostly level terrain and will last about 1 hour. Children and leashed dogs welcome. Free. No reservations required. For more information call (425) 885-3173



Interlaken Boulevard, 1913 (Courtesy Seattle Municipal Archives, Item No. 29376)